

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 HA-05 /094 W
-----085905 140717Z /21

P R 140625Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2091
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMCONSUL DURBAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4681

E.O. 11652: XGDS
TAGS: PDEV, PINT, RH, SF
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: VIEWS OF AFRIKANER EDITOR

1. LUCAS DE LANGE, DEPUTY EDITOR OF THE DIE TRANSVALER,
NATIONAL PARTY ORGAN IN THE TRANSVAAL, RECENTLY WROTE A SERIES
OF PESSIMISTIC ARTICLES ON HIS LATEST VISIT TO RHODESIA.
DE LANGE IN A CONVERSATION WITH POLITICAL COUNSELOR ON AUGUST 10
SAID THAT HE FOUND THE WHITE POPULATION INCREASINGLY DEMORALIZED.
THE PROSPECT OF "RUNNING AWAY" WAS JUST UNDER THE SURFACE IN
EVERYONES MIND. PLANES AND TRAINS, HE SAID, WERE FULLY BOOKED
AS MANY WHITES WHO WERE STAYING WERE SENDING OUT THEIR FAMILIES.

2. THE WHITE POPULATION, DE LANGE SAID, NOW SEE THAT THE
INTERNAL SETTLEMENT IS NOT THE SOLUTION AND THAT IT WILL NOT END
THE WAR BUT WILL PROBABLY MAKE IT MORE INTENSE. THE WHITES BELIEVE
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THAT ONLY AN ARRANGEMENT BRINGING BACK NKOMO WOULD SALVAGE
THE SITUATION AND END THE CONFLICT. DE LANGE SAID THAT
SMITH'S ONLY OPTION NOW IS TO DELAY INDEPENDENCE AND TO TRY TO
NEGOTIATE SOME BROADER ARRANGEMENT. THE WHITES WERE CLEARLY IN
FAVOR OF PROCEEDING WITH AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING.

3. DE LANGE BELIEVES THAT MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE ARE STRONGLY

OPPOSED TO AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING BECAUSE THEY PERCEIVE THAT IT WOULD MEAN RECOGNITION OF THE FAILURE OF THE MARCH 3 AGREEMENT AND THIS SERIOUSLY UNDERMINE THEIR SUPPORT AND THEIR CHANCES TO ATTAIN POWER. DE LANGE THOUGHT THAT THE UANC STILL PROBABLY HAD MAJORITY SUPPORT AMONG THE BLACK POPULATION BUT THAT MUZOREWA WAS NOW THOUGHT OF AS A "MOUSE". THE BLACK POWER STRUGGLE IS INTENSIFYING AND CHIKEREMA IS COMING ON STRONG WITHIN THE UANC. THE WHITES, HOWEVER, DISTRUST CHIKEREMA AND WOULD PREFER NKOMO.

4. DE LANGE SAID THAT HE WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE MILITARY'S LOSS OF CONTROL IN A GOOD PORTION OF THE COUNTRYSIDE. THE SOLDIERS NOW DID NOT KNOW WHAT THEY WERE FIGHTING FOR. DE LANGE ASKED THIS QUESTION OF MANY RHODESIAN OFFICERS INCLUDING GENERALS, AND NO ONE COULD GIVE AN ANSWER. THE OFFICERS SIMPLY EMPHASIZED THEIR SANDHURST TRATION AND SAID THAT THEY WOULD DO THEIR DUTY AND FOLLOW ORDERS. DE LANGE ALSO SAID THAT HE HAD LEARNED OF THE BEGINNING OF SOME DISOBEDIENCE IN THE WHITE POPULATION TO MILITARY CALL-UPS. SOMEONE TOLD HIM OF A CALL-UP LETTER BEING RETURNED WITH A SCRIBBLED MESSAGE FROM THE PARENTS SAYING THAT THEY DID NOT WANT THEIR SON"TO DIE FOR CHIKEREMA."

5. COMMENT: DE LANGE, A VERLIGTE (LIBERAL) NATIONALIST, HAS IN THE PAST BEEN BASICALLY SYMPATHETIC WITH THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT EFFORT. HIS CURRENT VIEWS THUS REPRESENTS A PARTICULARLY TELLING ASSESSMENT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, EDITORS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PRETOR04681
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DOWNGRADE PER 78 PRETORIA 5253 DTD 9/7/78
Executive Order: X4
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780331-0748
Format: TEL
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780867/aaaacecm.tel
Line Count: 94
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fded0d64-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1748536
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RHODESIA: VIEWS OF AFRIKANER EDITOR
TAGS: PDEV, PINT, SOPN, RH, SF
To: STATE USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fded0d64-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014